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We don't know when you're going
But you'll soon be on your way.
We don't know who is waiting
There, a "welcome home" to say.
But a merry, merry Christmas
Is the greeting we would send
To you and all your loved ones
At the joyful journey's end.

The Staff.

The Saddest Story I Ever Heard

Viola Seltz, Adelphian, '24

I remember,—it all happened just after I broke my new doll. It was a dark cold day in the last week of December. It was not quite late enough to light the lamps, and mother and I were sitting by the open fire, she in her big arm chair, and I in my little red rocker close beside her.

I thought she looked unusually pale that day. She seemed a bit nervous. And I remember how pityingly she looked at me as she began to tell me,—ah! too well she knew what joy,—what a spring of happiness her story was destined to take forever from my life—and I was oh! so young to hurt! But she took my little hand in hers and told me, slowly, carefully choosing her terms in simple words that I might understand her. She tried in a mother's way to speak a word of comfort now and then to my surprised and saddened heart. I remember, too, how my whole world changed with that dying light, as the first real sorrow and regret of life crept into and burdened my tender, baby heart. It was too

much for me. I tried not to believe it. I begged her to take back the word she had spoken and say it was not so. Poor mother! It must have been hard for her. Alas! that such a task should fall to her who loved me more than life itself, and in whose bosom my every pain had double weight! Why should she be the one to tell me? I have often wondered since life has put us further apart, where colder walls have heard my sighs, and bolder lips have told me harsher tales to tear away my most cherished dreams and fancies, how she, the meekest of the meek, could once have been so brave to tell me *that!* But it had to be. I was careless; money was scarce. And well she knew that before another twelve months I would know the naked truth. Perhaps I'd learn at school from some rude girl or boy. She knew it would be harder then. So there, by the glowing fireside in the dying twilight of a winter day, my sacred mother crushed to earth the brightest and happiest dream of my life. She told me who *Santa Claus was!*



The Syrians

Jo Grimsley, Dikean, '25

Marria was a beautiful girl, a dark, large-eyed Syrian. Her childhood had been short and work-laden. She had tended children at their play, had sung ancient folk songs to them and slapped their swarthy faces when they needed it. She had made lace and listened to the advice of her grandmother; she had grown rounder and prettier, and she had early developed an ambition which she often voiced to her impatient goats as she let them out each morning from their pen. She had skipped after the goats, murmuring a queer little chant:

"I shall grow up soon;

Soon I shall go away.

I leave you filthy goats;

I hate the smell of you!

I shall go to America."

Each morning she told it to the goats and each morning she was more strongly determined. She was wise; she would listen to the advice of the old grandmother; she would not marry at all; she would not raise babies.

So it was, when young Jergen Haar, a handsome young man of the village, began to look at her with tenderness in his eyes, that she tossed her head disdainfully and gave him no chance to speak. But Jergen, who was some years older than the girl, was determined; he went about his wooing in the right manner (among peasants): he treated her indifferently and was even rude to her. Marria tried to argue that he was stupid because he had not before found someone to marry; she told herself that she would not look at him and certainly she would not give up her resolve not to marry. But all her arguments were fu-

tile because she could not deny that he was handsome and that all the women were jealous of her; besides, she was flattered that a man as old as Jergen should wish to marry her, a mere girl.

Within three months after her seventeenth birthday, she married Jergen. All the cousins in her family chided her and all the aunts approved her for renouncing her former decision; but Marria only offered a smile of great happiness and looked proudly at her husband. He, too, was happy although he tried not to show it and spoke quite gruffly to her when they were before people.

It was a quiet, simple life for Marria who no longer tended goats. Now she never thought about America or wished to be any where but with her husband. Their rarest happiness was when a baby boy was born. Jergen was exultant.

"Now," he said, "there is someone to bear my name after me. Marria, how great a happiness for us that it is a son! We are blessed." There was a modest celebration, a little party of beaming neighbors who wished good luck for the child. All exclaimed with delight at the brilliance of his birth—star which an old man pointed out.

"His life will be an adventurous one; he will travel far," the old greybeard said to the simple, trusting company. "I never saw a finer star!" The priest and all the neighbors agreed with him. The young mother was happy, dreaming that her son must surely do unusual things.

All went happily for seven years. The wife did not get old quickly as her cousins did. The husband stayed young and

handsome, brawning and hardening with his work in the sunshine. The whole village agreed that there was no prettier or smarter child than Albert.

Then, one morning, came a peddler to the door. It was early and Jergen had not yet gone to his work. The peddler had some combs and bright pins, some beads and even lace to show Marria, but that could wait because he had something wonderful to show to Jergen. So Marria went back to her cooking while her husband and the peddler talked, sitting outside the kitchen door in the fresh air of a Spring morning. At intervals she passed quite close to the door, for she was curious. Stopping, she could hear the word "America" used often. Indeed, she heard it each of the times she listened.

At breakfast, her husband and the peddler talked on; Jergen asking many questions. He asked them eagerly, frowned, forgot to eat, and asked more questions. After breakfast they sat under the shade of a tree while the peddler talked long and eagerly. Marria watched the darkening brow of her husband and was uneasy; she wished the peddler would go away and yet she wanted to see the things. Finally, her husband called her. She knew that he had resolved upon something but she could not guess what it might be. He smiled and told her to bring the boy. She flew away to obey him and quickly came back with the sleepy child. To her delight, her husband bade her choose a pin and neck-lace from among the gorgeous display. She did so with happiness shining in her eyes. Was there ever a husband so good, so generous, so handsome? She looked up from the cheap baubles in her hands to observe the movements of the peddler who was arranging a queer looking black

box upon a worn tripod. Her eyes grew wide with amazement when she learned that the man was going to make a picture of her husband and her boy. She rushed to them, fastened the bright pin upon the breast of her indulgent husband, placed the beads around the neck of her wondering son, kissed them both, and ran away watching anxiously as if she was afraid that some harm would come to them. There they stood, the strong white teeth of her husband flashing in the sunlight and the curious eyes of her boy gazing intently at the peddler.

The peddler was gone and Marria had waved him a gay good-bye. He had left her a beautiful thing that he called a "tintype" picture of her husband holding the hand of her son. As the peddler topped the hill with his heavy pack, he turned and Marria waved to him and smiled.

That night when Jergen returned from his work, his eyes were shining with a resolution. He was gay and he sang merry songs as he waited for his wife to join him, at the tiny gate, in the glow of the sunset. She noticed that he looked away from her as he spoke.

"I am going to America," he said, as she raised her head eagerly, "I cannot take you with me; it would cost too much money." He was silent; Marria's head drooped slowly, her eyes stinging with tears. She looked at him again, raising her head with hope. But there was no hope; the muscles of his mouth were hard and his lips were drawn firm while he looked doggedly at the sunset. Her heart was beating rapidly, her throat was useless, and lips dumb. She stretched out her hand, struggling to speak, but there was no use. He was not yet done hurting her:

"I must take the boy with me," he

muttered half to himself, "he can help me make money over there. Then we can send for you. Garonto is going also; he believes that we can get rich in America because we know how to sell things at a bargain and we can save. We know how to live with cheapness and soon to get ahead of the foolish American who spends his money as quickly as he makes it. Indeed, I have heard that he spends it often before he makes it. I can get ahead of the American; I can fool him easily. But," he frowned in complexity, "I do not know their language and Garonto says it is hard to learn. Yet I can learn, and the boy can learn it sooner—," he went on, speaking at unusual length for him, telling her about his plans and the wonders of America.

But Marria was not listening; she was trembling violently and telling herself that she ought to thank her husband for his beautiful promise to send for her. She could think only of that and of the peddler whom she was beginning to hate with a fierce intensity. That Garonto, how she hated him! Had he not come like a veritable robber and torn down, stolen away all her happiness? She wondered how she could have waved to him and smiled that morning.

A week later, Marria sat quietly alone, her hand folded in her lap. Her husband was gone and with him their son. All that he had left her was a shiny pin, the glass beads, a picture, and the promise that he would send for her as soon as he was able. Now she must return to her people; she must stay there and bear the mockeries of her cousins; she must wait, like a goat penned in its pasture, until he sent for her.

Marria went to her people; she bore her troubles silently; she kissed the picture many times; she worked, and on

holidays she wore the pin and beads. Each week she waited hopefully for her summons; but it did not come, and there was never a message.

II.

After he left Syria, the years did not pass lightly over the head of Jergen; for he struggled with America. Arrived in America, he had started out eagerly, filled with hope and a great ambition. But New York was immense and there were so many foreigners, many of them who knew the language, all trying to get ahead and to do the same thing that he was trying to do, that he was bewildered. He did not know the language and it was almost impossible to get anything to do. Finally, there was nothing left for him to do except to leave New York, and, having bought his peddler's pack, he started out with his son.

But the walking was wearying and slow with the heavy pack and the short foot-steps of his son delaying him. The Northern country people were impatient at his broken speech and were not too kind. They seemed to resent it because he had the boy with him. He was going South weary, discouraged, often without enough food. As he travelled deeper in the South, things were better. Kind-hearted country women, in their isolated farm houses, welcomed a pack of bright wares brought to their doors; they were sympathetic and listened attentively when he talked in his broken speech; they petted the boy and fed him while they bought things from his father. Bright-turbaned, good natured negro women also bought from him, laughing with great pleasure as they caught up gaudy strings of beads in their hands and put them around their dusky necks. The boy never failed to look at them with a startled wonder, his dark eyes

wide. He gravely eyed the capering pickaninnies who had come to see how near they could get to the peddler without getting slapped by their mothers. The bright beads, if they brought any memory of Marria with her necklace, conveyed only a dim and vaguely disturbed thought of her to the dazed brain of Jergen, causing him to frown and press his forehead with the back of his hand.

The hardest problem that faced him now was what to do with his son. He knew that he would travel much more quickly if he did not have to take the boy with him, but where should he leave him, what should he do with him? Jergen was asking himself this, turning it over in his slow brain, as he walked, the weary child trudging behind him, into a small Southern village one evening at dusk. Jergen was broken; he walked like a beaten thing, limping slowly. America and New York had been too much for him. New York, like a giant mill had caught him fresh from his country into itself and ground him, turning him out crushed and broken, apathetic and stunned, to travel through the country sides of America. He was fast developing a stolid indifference to everything, but he was not yet too dulled to see that the child needed attention.

Jergen found in this village one of his own countrymen. This man was stout, jolly, and the prosperous owner of a cheap restaurant. He served Jergen and Albert generously with food, and then sat down to talk in their native tongue with such friendliness that he almost succeeded in causing a tiny glow of interest in the stolid and taciturn Jergen. The restaurant owner was enthusiastic about America and, not perceiving the bitterness of Jergen, talked on and on

about its advantages. He asked Jergen to spend the night with him, an invitation which the tired man accepted readily.

The men talked long after supper. Jergen was encouraged by the other man's air of confidence and was almost touched when the kind Syrian's wife insisted upon putting Albert to bed with her own children. He responded to the man's friendly advances by confessing that he was worried about what to do with his son while he was peddling over the country side.

"Why," said the restaurant keeper, with great assurance, "your son must only go to school, which he can do for no money. My sons, they go to the fine American brick school without paying money for only the books that then belong to us." He nodded his head vigorously, his rosy face flushing with pride. "They pay nothing, indeed, and then the American school children, they come to eat at my cafe and pay me the money to give to my family. It is a fine thing, this America. Your son can live with us here and go to the school with my boys while you are upon the road making money for him and you. After school he can clean fish in the restaurant and work with my boys at bringing wood and carrying buckets of oysters; that will pay for him here. He will go to school and learn to read and write and learn the arithmetic so that he can help you when you have made enough money from peddling to come here and begin a store with dry-goods. Then you can come here to see him whenever it pleases you."

Jergen stayed in the village to rest for a day. It seemed peaceful and restful after the long route and he hated to leave his fellow-countryman who

spoke his own tongue. Even his dulled brain could not fail to appreciate the beauty of the place, a small village almost asleep on the bank of a broad, lazy river. Leaning upon the railing of the long, white-washed bridge and watching the joyful sports of his son with the other Syrian boys, he decided that he must take the advice of his countryman and let the boy stay there and go to school.

"Come here, Albert," he called, and watched the boy leave his companions and walk toward him. "Do you like your playmates, my son? Are they kind to you?"

"Yes," said the boy, looking anxiously at his father, fearing that they would be leaving the pleasant village soon to go back to the road. "They will teach me to catch fish and to throw the horse shoes straight."

"Would you like to stay here with them while I go on the road? You can go to the American school and I will come back often to see you," he added as he saw the quick tears spring to the boy's eyes at the thought of leaving him.

Jergen became less hard as he smoothed the boy's hair and tried to hush his sobbing telling him that he could make more money if he went on alone. Then the boy looked up eagerly through his tears.

"You will make more money and send for my mother? How soon will she come? Oh, I'm glad!" and he forgot his grief then, impulsively clasping Jergen about the neck. But Jergen's brow was darkened and he was silent.

That evening the father and son spent together on the river bridge. They watched the glowing sun cast copper flames across the broad expanse of the river before it sank behind some distant

pinces, and they watched the purple dusk swallow up the gleam of the river. They saw great black buzzards settling slowly down upon stark, white trees, the long, dead ghosts of a nearby island; it was an almost tropical scene. The man pressed the boy closely to him, sighing.

That night they told each other good-bye, for the peddler had to be up and gone early in the morning. Albert cried himself to sleep, comforting himself that soon he would see his mother, but wretched that he was losing his father.

Albert remained in the village, going to school and learning the art of catching fish. He grew rapidly in stature in learning, and in the knowledge of American customs. He was bright in school and advanced rapidly, but his soul was wretched as he grew older and saw the difference between the American boys and himself. They would play with him gladly enough upon the playground as he brought them treats, ran errands, and did their arithmetic for them. But they teased him cruelly about his father, a common peddler, and because he had no mother. Albert's father came to see him at long intervals; each time he was more taciturn, silent, and stolid. The boy would walk the streets with his father, his heart beating swiftly as his head held high, striving with all his might not to be ashamed, but when he was alone, his head drooped and his silent father, indifferent to all except him, saw it and was hurt.

Jergen had been saving money and was now, at last, ready to keep a store. It was a great secret pride that he had set up a store like those few in the village that were owned by Americans. "Now," he thought, "my son must be proud of me." Albert helped him with the store, coming in merrily from school,

for he was now being treated with respect, if not equality by the American boys who could not help admitting his brilliance in school, his vivid enthusiasm, and his tenderness for his father. Still Albert was never invited to their homes although they profited largely from his eager generosity, and although they were friendly to him on the streets. The boy found no real companionship, a thing for which he ardently longed.

His soul was sick with the struggle of it. But his greatest effort was to be loyal to his indifferent father whom he had begged vainly to send for his mother. The boy realized, after a mental struggle, that nothing could stir the stolid indifference of his father, that nothing would make the broken man see that they must send for Marria. He, Albert, must do it alone. This was a mammoth task for the youth, having to work in the store which brought little profit and receiving small wages from his penurious father. It was with real sacrifice and energy that he saved the money slowly, bit by bit, keeping it from his father. But at last he had done it, and the money had been sent. His mother, separated from him sixteen years, was coming!

III.

Sixteen gray years had dragged themselves along wearily. They passed so slowly and heavily that Marria sometimes became interested to see if they were going to stop entirely. But they did not stop; they passed on relentlessly. The pin was long ago blackened, the beads were worn out, and Marria no longer kissed the "tintype." For long years she had been the pack donkey of the family; hard work and the lack of happiness had made her almost old at forty years.

At last the wonderful day with the

long-expected message had come. Marria, her head bowed upon her work-worn hands, sat trembling and whimpering the whole of that morning. She took no heed of anything. The members of her family were glad enough to move softly about her and pack her few belongings, to prepare food, and to get ready a cart for her. Her oldest brother would get the money from a bank in Ptolemais where it was waiting for Marria. It was noon before they started for Ptolemais, the nearest port. Marria was dazed, but she was happy for the first time in sixteen years.

On the ship, she sat quietly never saying anything. Sometimes she trembled violently when she thought of meeting her husband and son in New York. Often she kissed the faded brown picture and sometimes she crooned a happy little song to it. Frequently, fears tore at her. What was this big America like? Would its people despise her because she could not speak their language? Her people had always laughed at foreigners who could not speak the language. What were the customs of this strange place? Suppose that a man might have more than one wife—suppose that her husband had a wife, a young woman with red lips and dark hair. She peered anxiously into a small, cracked mirror and sighed; her hair was still dark, but her lips were faded. Poor Marria! Her simple soul was overwhelmed with excitement and with happiness; she lay awake at night upon the ship, praying, fearing, and hoping that her husband was grown older too.

IV.

After Marria has tried to bring it all back, to visualize the wonderful dream that happened to her from the time she left the ship at New York. But, with the

perversity that dreams have, she could remember only parts of it, parts which stood not vividly as same things do in dreams. She knew that she had been dazed with wonder and joy when she first saw the most beautiful of all men, a tearful youth who had clasped her to him, calling her "mother". She had been very much frightened because she had not known if he was her young husband unchanged. Then she had remembered, that this youth was more wonderful, far more handsome than her husband and that he called her "mother."

"Oh, Gracious God!", she had said in a shaken voice, "It is my *son!*"

Then she remembered her foolish tears, and the great happiness of laughter that had seized her, and how she had held the head of her son to her breast, kissing his dark hair and wetting it with tears. He had stood up tall and thrown back his head proudly, drawing her away with him, his arm around her. He had bought her all manner of good things to eat and had eagerly watched her as she tried to eat them. Then he had bought for her an American dress that was very fine, so fine that she was timid about wearing it. She remembered the train trip; how he had taught her some most queer words that were American, and how sorry she had been that she could remember only one which she said often. "How do?", she would practice saying very softly and then laugh with pleasure when he caught her saying it. It was with a sudden start that she thought of her husband for the first time since seeing Albert. She felt a guilt and an odd fear when she thought of him and became suddenly silent. But Albert was quick to perceive and interpret this silence.

"My father is waiting to welcome us," he said reassuringly, knowing that his

father would be at the village depot awaiting his arrival. "He could not leave the store to come with me." Then he talked to her gayly and quickly, telling her about the village and their store, about the kind people there and how she must not forget to say "how do you do?" Marria listened attentively, but her mind was upon her husband, fighting the fear that she had of meeting him.

The most indistinct part of that vague and after clouded dream was the meeting of her husband. She remembered her relief when she had seen that he was older and worn, that he was stout and had a long mustache; she was glad that he was strangely silent. Further than that, she found it hard to remember. She did not care that he was taciturn, that he was clumsy in his awkward attempts to be kind to her, and that he had lost his interest in everything except in trying to make money. She did not care about anything except her wonderful son and she loved him more than anything; she loved him so much that she was afraid of the displeasure of the Great Diety for having an idol; she prayed to Him that he would forgive her that one sin.

Often she would sit under the lamp-light with folded hands, looking at her son's dark head bent over a history or an account book, and think with a great delight how wonderful, how strong and beautiful he was—her son! Then such a great exultance would seize her that she forgot the sonorous breathing of her husband, sleeping by the fire. Albert was her great joy. Her heart quickened, she heard his approaching footsteps, as it had not done since the long past caresses of her husband in their youth. In the daytime, while she was working in the store, she always listened for him, looking up quickly with a bright smile

when he came. She sought in every way to please him, greeting the American women, who came to buy things, with a smile and a brave "how do". Her every thought was of him; alway she questioned herself how she could ease the small furrow that was ploughing itself between his eyes, telling her that something was hurting him. She felt that he was secretly unhappy and she was jealous because she did not know what it was, worried because he did not reveal his hurt to her.

"Dear son," she had asked him softly, "is there anything to make you happy? Can you not tell it to me?" And he had answered her with an indulgent smile.

"No, my mother. Nothing troubles me now that you have come. I am happy. Tomorrow night I have a gift for you. I tell you now so that you can think about it all tonight and tomorrow.

Marria did think of it often, but she thought more often about the expression of Albert's face when he was not talking to her; she tried helping to analyze the half-tired, half-wounded look that he had. Could it be that these American people did not see how wonderful her son was? No, that was impossible! But if it could be so, she knew that it would hurt him deeply. Perhaps it was that he did not have enough money from the store to please him; perhaps he was pining for the sight of a young Syrian girl, and the Springtime was turning his thoughts to marriage. Ah no! Jealous thought, when there was no Syrian girl near! Or perhaps he was ill. She tortured herself in a hundred ways, seeking a remedy and never guessing that Albert's heart was being gradually crushed because of the prolonged indifference of the Americans to his mother and himself; that his soul was besieged by a great, bitter

wrath because of it. All his fine enthusiasm and his eagerness to become a true American was becoming dulled after a long time of vain hopefulness. The furrow between his brows spelled disillusionment and despair. He was afraid that his mother had sensed it. They had not dared to say to each other what they felt concerning the Americans. Albert would not say it, and his mother did not, thinking that Americans must treat all foreigners as they treated her son and herself. Albert was weary with the struggle; now he was resigned. That he had lost the hope of companionship with Americans was a bitter realization, but even that could not destroy the joy that he felt in the tender love and companionship of his mother.

He came home early on the afternoon of the promised gift. He smiled as he saw his mother looking curiously at the large wooden box. Already she had bought an axe to open it and was now waiting for him like a patient child. He teased her as he worked at opening the box.

"It is only a box of wood, my mother, that I have brought for you a present. See, it is one wooden box inside another! Is it not a poor gift? But the wood is able to sing and to make beautiful music. Is not this polished wood, shining splendidly? You see, this wood could not finish its song when it was suddenly cut down in the forest, so it sings now to make up for it." Then as he saw her incredulous and startled look, he laughed merrily, "It is an invention that a great American has made, a machine inside this wood that can sing. Now wait and I will show you." He put a record upon the victrola and started the machine.

"It is an Italian who sings, mother."

Marria sat motionless as if she had

been suddenly stricken dumb, listening to the deep, rich voice of an Italian singer. Her eyes were filled with tears when the song was ended and there was a great wonder in her voice.

"These Americans", she said, "Oh, my boy!", for she suddenly understood and her heart ached.

"Yes, these Americans", said the boy and his voice was gently bitter. He stopped the whirling disc of the victrola with a slow movement. "They are queer. They do not understand. They worship this Italian who sings, and yet they are cruel to all foreigners who are not great."

To Autumn

Naomi Alexander, Aletheian, '26

Fair Autumn bright, to thee I sing, O Queen
Of Seasons. Gold is thine; rich saffron flaunts
And runs molten o'er all past summer's green.
To flaming splendor turn thy leafy haunts,
With treasures more than kings can call their own.
Such tapestries that ne'er before were spun,
Rare works of filigree, their age unknown,
With pendant prisms turning back the sun.
Art prodigal in beauty, yet thy worth
Is more than this. A vast supply of seeds
And other aids against long winter's dearth
Bestow thou upon man for future needs.
Fain would I wish that God like you made me,
Most useful, yet, the fairer far to see.

On Christmas Eve

Irma Lee Sadler, Adelphian, '24

Christmas Eve, and the whole world had taken the veil. In the uptown district the snow-hooded lamp posts brought to mind white-swathed nuns marching decorously to prayer, oblivious of the dingy crowd surging around them. The walk and street which had been so immaculate in the early morning were now reeking with slush and dirt. It was as if a horde of uncouth barbarians had invaded a white sanctuary and with ruthless hands were despoiling its purity. Like outrageous engines of war, automobiles were charging up the street, drowning out the gently whispered protest of the falling snow. And like pitiless invaders, the crowd pushed on and on, each person aloofly wrapped in the cloak of his own interests. Each seemed to consider all the others as necessary obstacles to be passed. Christmas Eve, and all were too busy to stop, that the frail snow flakes might tell the story of peace and love to all men.

Inside the jewelry shop, where I stood waiting for a package, an air of smug-security prevailed. No jostling and clanging here, no room for anything so disturbing as mere humanity. The clamor of the street was shut out, and with it, all the hurried relentlessness of the world. The aristocratic silver sat stately and at ease on the tables. Its tranquility withstood even the gay rivalry of the cut glass that winked and coquetted amorously.

Against stretches of black velvet the pearls lay, serenely sure of their beauty. And all around, amethysts, emeralds, turquoises and rubies kindled and flamed in passionate loveliness. Suave-voiced

attendants moved silently about, conferring purchases upon the buyers. Sleekest of all was the fat, white-haired old owner who moved ponderously among his patrons, his face creased with brisk, meaningless smiles. The atmosphere of his shop must be cheerful. People bought more in a happy place. And he could do his part in making everything pleasant. His face was trained to smile even when his heart was cold. Christmas Eve, and the trade was good.

Once more the door opened, and a boy and girl entered. Both were modestly dressed, and both were apparently embarrassed. All of the other clerks were engaged, and with stately tread the owner advanced toward them. With a bland smile of encouragement, he led them to the gleaming show case, and trundled himself behind it. Then leaning forward, in his most persuasive tone he begged their pleasure,

"What is it that you desire?"

The embarrassment became acute, and only after a manly attempt did the boy's voice make itself heard.

"Uh, we want a wedding ring—to see one—a gold band," he managed to say.

He looked at his companion, and all the suppressed joy and happiness that had before strained their faces, now found expression in smile and shining eyes. They beamed upon the old gentleman, and he, forgetting that he was a manager, beamed back. A soft, friendly chuckle expressed his sympathy. Eagerly he stooped; and finding the tray he sought, he placed it before them. With the air of a jovial monarch, he selected several rings and placed them one by one

into the happy, trembling hands. Off and on the girl's finger they slipped the shining circles until at last one was found that fitted. Nods and smiles signified mutual consent of its choice. Importantly the boy brought forth his purse and counted out the money. The old jeweler smiled in tender reminiscence "When is it to be?" he queried.

"This morning," the two answered to-

gether, and no one thought them incoherent. Their happiness was more articulate than speech.

"A merry Christmas, and a happy life," he added his benediction to their wedding.

They went out, and the shop seemed less alive. Christmas Eve, and there was still good will between men.

Snow

Kate C. Hall, Aletheian, '26

To me it almost seems
 The greatest desecration
 For Snow unbroken to be marred.
It is like the dreams
 That are best, remembered
 When they are unspoken, when they're barred.
Behind closed lips, I stand
 In the presence of snow's spotlessness
 And dread to put upon its lovely white
Even the most caressing hand,
 Feeling 'tis His love of purity expressed
And any desecrating foot is grievous in His sight.

Drift

Collie Garner, Cornelian, '24

"How the jolts do hurt! A box car at the end of a long string of flats was never meant for sick people. The men are good to me. They have put their blankets and a mattress on the floor; but that does not help much. The road is steep and rough. The stops hurt worst of all. The doctor is kind. He does what he can to ease the pain. One of the men got off when we stopped and brought me some water. The train bumps down the mountainside.

"It is bad to be not able to walk. I used to climb highest of all the boys. That was when we shook down chestnuts on the Apennine ridges. I wonder what Benito does now? It was long ago. My father's farm was small. The family barely could live. I must leave home to work. We heard stories of America, 'The Land of Promise,' somebody called it. They told us that there everybody was rich. Nobody was a peasant.

"I came to America. It was all so strange and new. America was a big place. It scared me. Everybody was in a hurry. The people stared at me. Children called me 'dago' and 'wop.' I wondered why? At home my family was not low class. It was not easy to get work. I was glad when I found some Italians. It was in Nebraska. We put down crossties for a new railroad. We ate dinner out of tin pails and slept in bunk houses. I was almost happy at first. Then the plains made me hungry.

Italy is all mountains and sea. I drifted on. After many years, I found these mountains. They looked like home. There were even chestnut trees. They cut them down for pulp wood. I do not understand Americans.

"The work was hard. The men cursed me and made me do the rough jobs. They called me 'dago,' too, but I did not care so much now. Then, there were the mountains. I got along till my legs began to hurt and grow stiff. Still I worked. What else could one do? There was nobody to take care of me. The time came when I could not walk; could not get up. Then the men were kind. They brought their blankets. They left me food when they went to the woods. They sent for the company doctor. Nobody called me 'dago' any more.

"Doctor Atkins came up next trip of the log train. He said it was tuberculosis of the bone. The men looked at each other and turned away when he told me that. I did not understand. He said the company would send me to a hospital.

"They are taking me out of the woods. How the train bumps and jolts! The nearest man folds a blanket to make me a pillow. Dr. Atkins gives me a queer tasting drink. I wonder what a hospital will be like inside, and if I can walk again—The chestnut trees in our yard will be blooming now."

The Spy

Gladys Baker, Cornelian, '26

It was neither a very old Grandfather's clock which pompously tolled out the hour, nor a very new cupid clock which pertly reminded one that it was still there. It was a plain, ordinary clock which stood on the mantelpiece of an ordinary, disordered bedroom and struck. At this particular time, it happened to be striking nine.

Mr. Williams, with some difficulty, it must be confessed, heaved his stockinged feet onto the seat of a near-by splint bottomed chair and stretched himself to a seemingly dangerous extent.

"Aw-hum," he yawned. "Wonder if that young fly-by-nights' gonna stay here till morning. Looks to me like Pep could have her comp'ny on Saturday and Sunday like folks used to do, instead of on Tuesday night. She tries to be too stylish lately for me, anyhow."

His wife frowned lightly. "Millard, I wish you wouldn't call Polly 'Pep'. She's getting too wild lately, anyhow, I'm afraid, without you encouraging her in it. She said that picnic last night was all right, but—. But I know the child would tell me the truth about it. I know it was all right, anyhow, for Tommie Miller's girls were there, and that's the best family in Millsville. Tommie used to go with me reg'lar. I do wish Pe—Polly'd stay at home more though."

"Aw, young folks will be young folks. I love to have a good time myself."

His wife smiled, as she always did at his witticisms. Then, seeing him glance impatiently around the room, and knowing from twenty-two year's experience what he wanted, she hastily crossed over to the bed and rescued the newspaper

from under his coat, her son's shirt, and her daughter's organdie dress.

"If that child don't stop leaving her clothes around—," she sighed, for the fiftieth time that day.

She handed the paper to her husband, who took it with his usual complacency.

"Here's something else about that co-operative marketing mess," he exploded indignantly. "It's the biggest fake I ever heard of! Nothing in the world but a crowd of big bugs up at Washington trying to get all our hard earned money away from us!"

"But, Millard, I thought you were in favor of it."

"We—el, I never did think much of it. Henry Thompson said it was the biggest fake he heard of. He used to be in the warehouse business; so he ought to know."

He hitched his chair around until he could, by tilting it far back, bring the back of it in contact with the sewing machine. Thus he settled himself for a half hour's monologue for the general enlightenment of ignorant womanhood.

"When I asked Thompson about it, I told him exactly what I—," he began

"I wonder what Pep's going out in the hall for," Mrs. Williams interrupted, with unusual hardihood. "Luther ain't gone yet."

"D'know," he grunted with a preoccupied air.

"There! She's going back," sighed the anxious mother in a tone that showed decided relief at the indication that the young people had not quarreled.

She assumed an attitude of attention to the words of the oracle.

Suddenly all thoughts of cooperative marketing were driven from their minds by the sound of running on the front porch, and of quick shots.

"Millard! What's that?"

He jumped up and seized his rifle from its rack over the closet door. Since there was a second of unavoidable delay in disengaging the strings of a crochet bag from the trigger of the rifle, his wife reached the door first.

He, however, forgetting the shorter way through the hall, led the way cautiously and noiselessly around the long porch, bumping into the swing and treading heavily on the only creaky board in the whole house.

They came around the corner of the parlor just in time to see Pep's young man fire a last brave shot at least three feet too high to hit anything except a bird of the air.

The young man's prospective father-in-law raised his rifle, but lowered it hastily and laid it down in the corner when he discovered that it was not loaded. This being done, he leaped heavily over the banisters, narrowly escaping the thorns of his wife's favorite rose bush.

He, the capable, the efficient, took charge at once.

"D—don't point that at me, Luther. Tell me what's the matter at once, Polly. Come here and tell me!"

"Oh, Papa, they're longer than four of my longest steps."

"What?" he cried, jumping hastily aside.

"The tracks, come here and look at 'em."

"Guess I can tell that young cousin of mine one thing that'll make her open her eyes," thought Mrs. Williams a trifle vindictively.

"Let's see how far apart they are,"

cried her husband, glorying in the thoughts of the tale that he could tell at "the store."

"One, two, three steps," he measured, "and he jumped right over the snow ball bush!"

A thought seemed to strike him. "Come on, Luther, let's go get him," he shouted, running towards the opening of the hedge.

He stopped so quickly that he almost fell over. Luther. "La, here's one that's longer than the other!"

They breathlessly watched his measurements.

"It is!" they shouted triumphantly.

"But Pe—Polly, what was it?" Mrs. Williams inquired, overcoming her awe of her husband's probable disdain. "These tracks are nothing in the world but holes kicked in the ground by something."

"Why, it was—" Mr. Williams began. He stopped in embarrassment. Some one had asked a question that he was unable to answer!

"Well, I'll tell you," Pep started. "It was like this. Luther and I were sitting on the davenport talking, weren't we Luther?"

"Uh huh."

"And I heard a plank creak. I looked up and then right in front of me, I saw somebody move the shade."

Mr. Williams grasped his wife's arm—to steady her.

"Well, I didn't say anything," she beamed proudly upon her audience. "After a while I saw it again, and that time I punched Luther."

He assented, as he would have done if she had informed him that an earthquake was in progress.

"Well," she went on impressively, "he said, real loud, go get me some

matches, I want a smoke." And then he whispered out of the corner of his mouth, "and get my gun out of my coat pocket, quick!"

"I went in the hall and got them. When I came back in, I held the matches out to him and kept the pistol behind my back. He got up and yawned like he was sleepy. Then he grabbed the pistol and ran out, with me right behind him. Just as we got out on the porch, the man jumped over the banisters, right into that rose bush, and started to running. He went off down towards the

woods as hard as he could run, with Luther shooting at him all the time."

Luther nodded meekly, as if giving all the credit to his guiding star.

"I bet it was that sorry Vernon Jacobs prying 'round spying on us!" shouted Mr. Williams, shaking his fist towards a small house in the edge of the woods. "Wouldn't be surprised if he was scheming to set fire to the house. Let's see if we can find a kerosene can."

He stayed out until eleven o'clock looking for this conclusive evidence of a plot against his peace and happiness.

The Surgeon

Kate C. Hall, Aletheian, '26

For men who can shape bones and sinews straight,
And strengthen weakened backs and twisted feet,
And make men straight and strong who had been but late
Broken bodies and agony of soul;

For white-gowned men whose minds work like machines,
Whose strong, sure hands are swift and kind and brave,
To make anew both men and parts of men
And mold a back to give a child a chance;

For strong-souled men who can forget their pain:
In seeing pain by taking pain away;
For dreamers who would make the crooked straight,
We thank Thee, God, who sent Thy Son to heal.

Little Street Gamin

Maude Goodwin, Dikean, '25

The taxi had been forced to stop a block away from the station. She was hurrying to catch her train. He was so tiny that she did not know he was there until she felt her suit case become lighter. She looked down to discover a little fellow who did not come up to her elbow, tugging manfully with the bag.

"Carry yoi' bag lady?" and he turned up to her a wistful little face, which questioned as much as his words, and pleaded indefinitely more. She felt for the little urchin and had not the heart to let him.

"No thank you, sonny. It's too heavy for you," she smiled.

"No 'm." His big brown eyes still pleaded, and he captured the bag. He was so tiny that when he tried to carry the case down by his side he could not keep it off the ground. With a great effort he heaved it up on his shoulder and staggered along by her side.

Now she could really observe him. He could not have been more than five, and was small for his age. His little face

was worn and worried, but clean. A raggedy old grey cap, much too large for him, slid over his head as they hurried down the block. The top of one of his shoes, which were huge, for him, was absconded with a pants leg which hung loose and floppy and hindered his would-be strides.

The distance was only part of a block and the time only two or three minutes until they reached the great gate to the tracks. The little fellow's burden had made it seem miles to him. To the lady, sympathy for his little gamin had made it seem hours. The train was waiting on "track number fourteen" and she must hurry. She took her suitcase from his shoulders, gave him a silver dollar, which almost covered his tiny palm, and hurried away.

Once she turned to look back. The little fellow was standing in the self-same spot in which she had left him, his mouth open, gazing incredulously at the immense, shining, silver coin in his hand.



Prelude to the Song of Pan

Jo Grimsley, Dikean, '25

I am Pan!
 Foolish mortals call me lazy;
 Some of them even think me a goat.
 But I can
 Lie in the rushes in the hazy
 Blue of the morning. If my coat
 Is shaggy—why should I care?
 I do the things they would not dare
 To think of doing.
 I do my wooing
 When the morning is young.
 When the birds have sung
 Their early matin, I pipe sweetly.
 My love is a nymph;
 She is a white, white flower.
 Mortals call her Nyssa, Dogwood Blossom.
 She treads with light feet, tripping,
 Dancing to the song of my need.
 Ah, my love, run, hasten, speed!
 Poor unlovely Pan
 Is thy lover. He can
 Only weep, knowing he but holds thee by music!
 I see her coming!
 The swift strumming
 Of the wood-pecker ceases, and
 He listens to the plaintive note of Pan.



The Pangs of Being Commonplace

Lisbeth Parrot, Dikean, '25

"I do not mean to imply that I am any better, or any worse, than other men; but I do say that I am different," wrote Rousseau. He is the pattern hat; and I am one of the \$2.98's that ride on the heads of the shop-girl, and my cook, and the country maidens that flock to town on Saturdays in the family wagon. You meet hats like me at every corner you turn; we haunt you. If you go to the next town, or the next, you find members of my tribe.

When I was a tiny child, I abhorred this commonplaceness as I do today. I remember the time when I envied a small lame girl as she hobbled down the street. People turned to look at her, while I passed by, unnoticed. Thereafter, I took to limping painfully. When I was told the story of Benedict Arnold I thought, "I'd rather do something terribly wicked, if I couldn't do something very good, so that, at least, I wouldn't be forgotten."

Oh! the pangs of being commonplace! I long to express my sympathy with a friend in happiness or in grief. Something within struggles to be free to go out to my friend and let her know that I share her experience. But, I can say only, "I'm glad," or "I'm sorry."

My friend and I see the symptoms of coming winter. The country about us blushes or turns to Midas' gold and blends its yellow and red and brown into color harmonies; we glory in Nature's granduer, yet we exclaim, merely, "Isn't it pretty!"

We are commonplace; the reactions that we feel are not our own, for they belong to everybody. We can know no

individual, secret emotions; ours are common property. Perhaps nature did not teach us to express what we feel because we feel only that which is known to everyone. But, oh, the satisfaction that such expression would bring to us!

"The little actor cons another part; Filling from time to time his humorous stage

With all the persons, down to palsied age,

That life brings with her in her equipage;

As if his whole vocation

Were endless imitation."

We imitate our parents. We use the colloquialisms our parents use; we talk about the subjects that our parents talk about; we take up our parents' habits. There is nothing new and different in us; everything may be accounted for by someone; "She's a chip off the old block," or, "You certainly have your daddy's ways." It is amusing to hear a small child of a dozen years greet one with: "Good morning, how're you this morning?" Amazed one answers (or is it through force of habit?) "All right, hon', how're you feeling?"

"Just fine, thank you. Isn't it a pretty day?" At that, one nearly collapses, so to speak. One would, if she didn't become sadly aware of the fact that this child is chanting the words which her father, mother, aunts, uncles, and millions upon millions of Americans repeat over and over each day in parrot fashion.

We try to be funny. We happen upon a remark (made by somebody else) that tickles us. We kill it by overwork. We

never have a bright idea of our own. Lacking originality sufficient to produce a new little joke, we retort, "I didn't ship it fur," or, "She ain't my brother." I gave up the latter phrase when I heard my cook use it. The pathetic element enters when we realize that we aren't trying to be "smart," but that we are fun-loving and desire to express ourselves. Because we are commonplace, we cannot be original and must resort to somebody else's wit. I try to educate my sense of humor above the common plane. But, when I attempt to adopt the sympathetic attitude towards the girl who sits down, unexpectedly, on a slippery, ice covered pavement this sixth sense will not be disciplined and causes me to giggle with the rest of the on-lookers.

When a choice bit of gossip is going around we lean our ears to hear; and, inwardly, we rate those who tell it and the others who sit and listen, as "gossip-ers." But we are different! We are above the ordinary horde of excitement-eaters—we only crave to know because of a human sympathy which we would share, and because of a desire to know this latest scandal as a bit of life. So, we elevate in our own minds, a curiosity that is common to us and the gossip that we condemn.

The pangs of being commonplace! The sadness of "growing up" comes in experiencing them. As a child, though I realized that I often had to "whistle

for my audience," to myself I lived an important personage. My birthday has always come on the fourth of August; and I felt, in my early years, that this date should stand out in everybody's life as it did in mine. I believed that I was not a commonplace child like the others I knew, and convinced myself that I was not the small daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Jones, but some kidnapped princess whom they had obligingly taken to bring up. I remember searching about the house for little notes folded under the table leg or for some royal garment that might be proof of what I really was. To me it was a source of tragic embarrassment that Mr. Jones and I happened to resemble each other so closely for this resemblance established in other people's minds the mistaken idea that we were father and daughter.

The years went by, and I became ambitious to serve the world unselfishly. Yet, even glorious dreams like that "fade into the light of common day." Money stretches out its fascinating tentacles, gripping me like other Americans, who have come to be termed "cold" and "money-mad"; millions of Americans who have sacrificed their ideals on the altar of selfish gain. But, oh, the remorse that one feels when she looks inward and sees that she has not been able to rise above the ordinary commonplace things of life.



“A Desire to Live”

Ellen Owen, Cornelian, '25

When I have seen a glorious morning sun
Climb up above the earth's round, dusky rim
To lift the vapors from the misty vale
And cast a halo about the hills' round crest
Whilst tinting all the sky with rosy hue,
I've longed to paint the scene thus glorified
And make the work a thing to live for ever
Where I have walked alone in woodland haunt
To feel the tranquil calm of Nature's spell
And know the peace and hope that comes therein,
I've longed to borrow Wordsworth's mighty pen
And write in words of everliving power
The wond'rous intimations I have felt
Of God and his relationship to me.
When I have seen a maiden heart respond
To love as does a rosebud to the sun
Unfolding, stretching forth its petals fair,
Revealing underneath its heart of gold,
I've longed to carol forth a song of love
And, singing thus, to make my song immortal.
But when I see around me the hordes of men
Who do each day their humble part in life
And cast behind them all the hopes of fame,
(Which only few of us, perchance, attain)
I long to take my place among these throngs
And practice every day those little deeds
That go to make a life what it should be—
A perfect cog within a moving wheel,
An humble, though a vital, part of it—
And, living thus, to make the race to live.

When Dreams Were Realities

Elizabeth Rollins, Dikean, '26

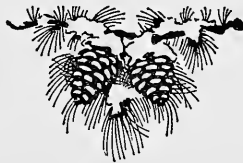
She was very poorly clad in a dress which, although thin and a rusty black, accentuated the slim boyishness of her figure. From beneath a black poke, much the worse for many seasons wear, escaped a myriad of golden ringlets, and two sad, deep violet eyes peered out from under the tiny brim. The bright lights of Broadway glared at her, but the hurrying throng paid no heed to the little creature who shrank close to the shops in order to shield herself from the cold wind.

She gazed into the brightly lighted shop windows at the smiling manikins, draped in gay silks, satins and fine lace, and at the luxurious furs scattered about. She longed for the feel of clinging silk against her skin and the deep, soft luxuriousness of fur. She looked sadly at her own coarse dress and with a little sigh moved on.

Startled from her reverie by some unusual noise, she looked up and found herself in front of a cafe where gayly arrayed people chatted over steaming coffee and tasted daintily the food in well filled plates. She remembered that she had had no food for many hours, but how could one eat without money. She put out her hand to touch the fruit, piled high in the window, but her hand

encountered only cold glass—cold like the rest of the world. Again she moved away, and quickening her step walked on and on until she came to a large, white stone mansion, behind a well kept lawn. She stopped for a moment, then stealthily looking from side to side, she fled down the driveway, keeping close to the shubbery, as if fearing detection. She entered the house through a side door, and crept up the back stairs, still peering from side to side. Once upstairs, she quickly opened a door revealing a dainty bed room, furnished in old ivory and hung with blue silk draperies. She threw her weather beaten hat across the room, shook her mop of curls, and rolled upon a bed, at the same time calling, "Celeste!"

A prim, French maid appeared who did not seem bewildered at seeing this dilapidated creature. "Oui, Mam'selle" "Help me get off these duds before Mummey comes up. She would never forgive me for going out in these relics." Then with a sigh and giggle, "Pretending is such fun. But hurry, Celeste," she surveyed her spacious ward robe. "Lay out my blue and silver evening dress and Ermine wrap. I am taking dinner at the Ritz-Carlton."



Letters

Irma Lee Sadler, Adelpbian, '24

As a child, I always wondered how it was that wise, calm grown-ups, who never clapped their hands over ice-cream, could become excited about the very uninteresting-looking pieces of paper which the postman gave away. It was the postman, himself, who interested me. I can remember how I perched on the front steps waiting for him to appear. The minute he rounded the corner, I descended upon him with the best imitation of a swoop which a very fat little girl could give. Hand in hand with him, I strutted along, almost bursting with pride at being allowed to help such an important person. He called me his "little girl", and with great seriousness he pleaded for permission to put me in his big leather pack and carry me to his house. He had no children, and it seems that he craved a little fairy in his home. Of course he was denied the pleasure of having me, but in time his desire has been more than fulfilled. He is the head of an orphanage, now.

But he was a great pal as long as he was a postman, and he just about monopolized my attention. Only when some gaudy red and yellow advertisement appeared did my interest desert him for the mail. To my great surprise these treasures were surrendered to me without the slightest hesitancy. I was content with my share, but I could never quite puzzle out why the rest of the family wanted the white letters instead of the pretty colored ones. Gradually, I threaded my way out of this maze known as childhood, however, and letters began to assume their real position in my scale of values. No longer did red stick candy symbolize

perfect happiness for me. Instead, letters became the "substance of things hoped for" in my life.

And getting a letter is a most delightful occurrence. The very sight of one gives the receiver a feeling of suspense and adventure which nothing else can. Each envelope is a magic square wherein anything might be hidden. The visit of a friend, an announcement of a marriage, the death of someone we know, a new book, the story of a tragic accident, theatre tickets, news of all these gay and somber events which make up our check-board of life come to us within those fragile holders. To open a letter is as dangerous in its way as to rub Alladin's lamp. Even the impossible may come forth, and once in my experience it did.

The day on which my wonderful letter came was dull, and drab, and cold. It was winter with no hope of spring. The trees and shrubs seemed to be almost paralyzed with the cold. The wind mumbled at the corners of the house like an old man who is too old and weary to do more than grumble at his discomfort. Even the steam pipes in the house had caught the spirit, and they knocked and growled in sullen rebellion. As for me, I was too dispirited to make a noise of any kind. Not even the statement that I had a letter could arouse me. I knew that nothing good could happen on such a day, and I was convinced that nothing could occur worse than the day itself. I had forgotten the magic power of letters, and it was with distasteful indifference that I tore open this one. When finally I realized its contents, my excitement was twice as keen because of

the hopelessness that had preceded it. One sentence in particular held my fascinated gaze.

"Because of the threatened influenza epidemic the authorities have decided to defer the opening of the college until January 18.

Oh, the joy of being alive. Oh, the beautiful kindness of humanity! The tiny nephew who had vainly tried to interest me in his "horsie" two minutes before, now found himself perched on the shoulder of a creature who galloped around like the wildest of wild horses, and laughed like a clown. Gone was my disgruntled mood. I was hilarious in my joy. Once more a letter had brought me happiness. Never again would I open one without a breathless feeling of excitement.

And I do think that we all are a little breathless when we read a letter. In fact that is a part of the ritual which time has established. Fancy with what excitement the early Babylonian seized his axe and ran to meet the runner stag-

gering under the load of two letters. How his heart must have raced as he pounded valiantly on the baked clay envelope in his effort to open his prize. And how tremblingly he must have lifted the heavy clay tablets with their queer triangular letters. The writing was different and the material written on was different, but his emotion and the news he sought were essentially what we feel and seek today. It is only natural that a man should crave to know of his home and his friends, and certainly no one can hear without an extra heart beat.

They are the high lights of our existence, these letters. One of them can brighten a day for us, and the constant hope of one can buoy us up for weeks. If the letter expected does not come on one mail, then it will surely arrive on the next, and the pleasure is merely deferred. Somewhere it is in that never ending line that weaves back and forth, back and forth, linking us with the life we have left; making us one with the world.



Fire

Edith Goodwin, Cornelian, '27

Long after the great burnished sun had sunk behind the distant blue mountains, and even the green and purple and gold that it had scattered over the clouds as it had faded, I sat alone in the library.

The world outside faded in darkness. My fire cast fantastic shadows on the ceiling and high book-cases, and made even the chairs seem grotesque. The fire was so bright and merry that I slipped to the floor in front of it. The happy crackling aroused my spirits. Joyously I followed the dance of the flames. Suddenly, I realized that I was not alone.

A spirit was there, a spirit clothed in scarfs of rose and yellow and blue. He tripped down the logs, curving, whirling, waving. He paused to look at me, then whirled away again. He danced, he looked, he twirled, he laughed. He looked again. He wanted to tell me something! My spirit felt his buoyancy, his joyous ecstasies. Seeing how eager I was, how happy, he laughed silently, and flung a kiss. Rippling his scarfs and leaping, he vanished. The crackling, popping music continued. With it my spirit danced gaily, freely, and dances still.



Don't Tell Your Mother

Maude Goodwin, Dikean, '25

As the crimson afterglow of an early December sunset died away, the cheery light of the fire became brighter and cast deeper and more fantastic shadows about the old library. Mrs. Kenyan and ten year old Ann were waiting for "father" to come home for the evening. As the two talked peals of young laughter played through the room. The fire caught the mirth and crackled more cheerily. Ann was telling her mother of some of her playmates and of the fun they had had that afternoon. Mary had had a wonderful secret. She had told them all about it; when it was going to happen, that it was going to happen to all of them, that it would last a "l-o-n-g" time; indeed all about it except what it was. Mrs. Kenyan laughed with Ann and vied with her in her wondering and speculation. Perhaps it would be a sleigh ride and skating at the lake; perhaps a Christmas party. There were lots of jolly things it might be!

Just here it occurred to Mrs. Kenyan that this undisturbed moment of happy companionship would be a good time to give some motherly advice to her little daughter, and to impress upon her the fact that she must never let anybody, even Elizabeth, her dearest chum, tell her anything which she could not tell her mother. Skillfully, she led the conversation into this serious channel. Ann entered into it with all the whole hearted seriousness of a child. With a child's complete trust, she agreed with everything her mother said until she was surprised and noticeably disturbed when her mother asked directly:

"Did anyone ever tell you anything, Ann, and tell you not to tell mother?"

Ann turned her big trustful eyes from her mother's face and gazed into the fire, as though she was trying to think. Really, she knew instantly. Johnnie had told her something one time and had made her promise "never, ever" to tell her mother. How vividly she remembered! It was one afternoon as they came home from school. They had run a long way, chasing "Sport," the Bryan's poodle; then they had sat down in the corner of the Marlut's yard to rest. She had felt at the time that she ought not to listen. But Johnnie's seriousness had been so impressive, and his insistence upon her promise not to tell so urgent that she had simply had to know. And she had promised. No, she must not tell now, and yet she could not tell her mother a story.

Suddenly she turned and looked straight into her mother's eyes.

"No, Motherby, nobody ever did—but once."

"Aren't you going to tell me all about it now?"

Mrs. Kenyan was pursuing her way carefully. She wished that Ann should not feel that she was being forced to tell. After much gentle coaxing, Ann finally told her what Johnnie had told her one afternoon on their way from school.

"But you see, Motherby," she said, perplexity and regret mingling in her big eyes, "I can't tell you what it was because I promised him I wouldn't."

"When was it, Ann?"

"Oh a long, long time ago; way, way last winter."

"You're both so much older now, Ann, I'm sure he wouldn't mind your

telling Mother. You've kept it so long."

Reluctantly this time, the little girl turned from the fire and faced her mother. With mustered resolution she confessed.

"Well, Mother, he told me there wasn't any Santa Claus, but he said, "Don't you ever tell your mother, because she firmly believes that there is."



The Awakening

Kate C. Hall, Aletheian, '26

"Having peered curiously down on the world that lay below her green-brown branch and having heard and seen much hurrying and buzzing there below, my soul thought that she had seen the world. All was beautiful, she was satisfied. The broad green leaves, flecked by the flickering sunshine, were enticing. She fed upon them, she lay lulled in their swinging arms, she bathed in the dew and rain-drops they held, until little by little she grew very sleepy. She drew a cloak of her own spinning about her and lay sleeping. Days and nights she lay dormant. The world swirled on through space. Sunshine and rain fell, and wind beat, but she never gave a bit of heed. It was good to lie thus, not thinking, not moving, only letting the slow dreams drift aimlessly in and out, with no attempt at catching and holding them. Then, for awhile, night—oblivion. The stars were blotted out and she slept without dreams.

The first sounds of approaching dawn came. Something pierced through the wall that lay between my sleeping spirit and the outer world, and she was stirred. She would have slept on, but the 'something', like a sudden gleam of sunlight piercing the aisles of an overgrown thicket, would not give her peace. Again she stirred, something at her side fluttered. Strange! What could be there? A feeling she must see the light took possession of her. Slowly she stretched. The wall

held, with a suddenly beating fear, she pushed harder. Did something yield? A little? Slowly and painfully, moment by moment, she stretched and pushed until—at last—her head burst through and the fresh, keen air rushed upon her. Too dazzled by even the pale light of the dawn to see, she struggled blindly, pulling her body up, up and out of the old, worn-out shell. Then freedom! She lay along the cool, sweet branch and something beat within her breast, and something beat feebly at her sides. She did not yet know what were these things, but instinctively she raised and lowered them, stretching them out and drying them in the first red rays of the rising sun. Long moments passed. New life pulsated in and about her. The fluttering things at her sides grew stronger and stronger. A slight breeze passed over, caressing her gently. The green leaves about her danced and whispered softly. The sun burst above the world in sudden splendor. With a heart full of escatasy, hardly knowing what she did, she rose into the air, fluttering the things at her sides, and flew. Wings! Miracles! The world lay spread before her: Flowers! Waters! Grasses! Trees! Beauty! My soul soared and dipped with her new, bright wings and flew in search of the world. My soul had changed her old garments for the new.

Tooth Brushes

Eleanor Vanneman, Cornelian, '26

Once there were five brothers newly come to America. The eldest had blue eyes, blond hair, and a blond mustache. The second had blue eyes, blond hair, and a blond mustache. The third had blue eyes, blond hair, and what he fondly termed a blond mustache. The remaining two had blue eyes, blond hair, and an intense desire to acquire the blond mustaches.

One evening these brothers went to walk up Fifth Avenue. As they gazed in the show window of a drug store, small brushes caught their attention. "T-o-o-t-h-b-r-u-s-h-e-s", read the first brother. "T-o-o-t-h-b-r-u-s-h-e-s", read the second. "T-o-o-t-h-b-r-u-s-h-e-s", read the third. And so did all the rest.

"Vas ist das?" asked the eldest. "Vas ist das?" asked the second. "Vas ist das?" asked the third one. And so did all the rest.

"Ve go herein?" suggested the elder.

"Ve go herein?" supplemented the next speaker in order. "Ve go herein", remarked the third. And so did all the rest.

Being thus agreed, they about-faced, and entered the drug store, where they were confronted by a King Tut necktie, upholstering a pink silk shirt, which formed a background for a bland, simplifying face.

"What can I do for you, today, gentlemen?" asked the shirt, the necktie, and the sizeable aperture in the bland face.

The five brothers, not at all taken aback, smilingly pointed to the brushes.

"Ah, yes, toothbrushes. Like to see them?" The pink shirt swept them out and lay them in a row on the counter.

"Vor vot?" asked the eldest. "Vor vot?" asked the second. "Vor vot?" asked the third. And so did all the rest.

"Teeth," replied the gentlemen. "Clean 'em". Brush 'em this way, ||, not this way =.

"Ja?" exclaimed the eldest, cocking his eye at the second, who replied "Ja?" to the third, who, being thus called upon voiced his opinion, "Ja?" he said. And so did all the rest. The last "ja", being addressed to no one in particular, carried the day. Five toothbrushes, paid for by seven nickels from each of the brothers, and wrapped in five separate packages, found their way into five pockets. The brothers went home.

The brushes were perfect. Each brother scoured his teeth and went to bed.

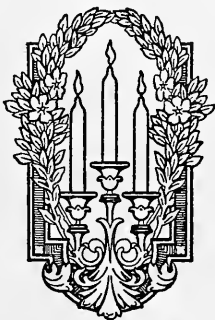
During the night, the eldest bethought himself of a way to distinguish his priceless treasure from those of his brothers. Getting up, he put a rubber band around the handle. The idea seemed to him such a perfect one that he woke his brothers to tell them. So enchanted were they that they, too, immediately placed rubber bands upon their toothbrushes. Then they all went back to bed and never had the slightest trouble in keeping their toothbrushes apart.

A Brave Deed of a Brave Man

Theresa McDuffie, Adelpian, '27

The "Washington Express" was speeding on its way from Washington to New York. The engineer had just looked at the steam and had turned his eyes back to the track. He complimented himself on running the fastest train and on keeping it in such good condition. While praising himself, he looked far down the road. He saw a speck which grew larger as the train moved closer to it. He grabbed his spy glasses and looked again. Horrors! nine lives were in danger down that track. Hurriedly he shut off the steam, but while doing so he knew that this alone would not stop the

fast moving train. Next he shoved on the brakes, trying his best to save those lives. "Only Providence can save them now," he whispered, while he grew deathly pale. Leaving his position by the window, he cautiously climbed down, endangering his own life but with a prayer on his lips for those lives that were so close to death. At last he reached the cow-catcher. Across this he stretched himself and held on with one hand. With the other hand, the brave young engineer reached out and, as the train flashed by, he picked up a *Cat*. Thank Heavens! nine lives were saved!



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